

Claims

1. A propeller protector slipper comprising:
 - a) a housing unit for enclosing a propeller, wherein the housing unit comprises an interior, an exterior, at least one side surface, a top surface, a bottom surface, a front surface, and a back surface, wherein a portion of the back surface is cut away to accommodate a propeller shaft and the side surface(s) provide a means for the propeller to slip into the housing unit in a longitudinal direction;
 - b) a means for securing the propeller within the housing unit; and
 - c) a bushing/reinforcing T along the surface of the cut away back surface.
2. The propeller protector slipper according to claim 1, wherein the housing unit further comprises a cushioning means in the interior of the housing unit.
3. The propeller protector slipper according to claim 1, wherein the housing unit further comprises a means for maintaining buoyancy in water.
4. The propeller protector slipper according to claim 1, wherein the housing unit is in the shape of a modified cylinder and has two side surfaces wherein one side surface is open to allow the propeller to slip into the housing unit in a longitudinal direction.
5. The propeller protector slipper according to claim 1, wherein the securing means comprises at least two aligned bore holes, wherein one bore hole is located at the top surface proximal to the open side of the housing unit, and the other bore hole is located on the bottom surface proximal to the open side surface of the housing unit; and a dowel rod having a proximal end and a distal end and of a sufficient size to be inserted through the bore holes; wherein the proximal end of the dowel rod and the distal end of the dowel rod comprise a means for ensuring the dowel rod remains engaged with the bore holes.

6. The propeller protector slipper according to claim 5, wherein the means for ensuring the dowel rod remains engaged with the bore holes comprises a hole in the distal end of the dowel rod, a clevis pin to be inserted into the dowel rod hole after the dowel rod has been inserted through the bore holes, and the proximal end of the dowel rod is shaped such that it cannot pass through the bore holes.

7. The propeller protector slipper according to claim 1, wherein the housing unit further comprises a means for attaching the housing unit to a vessel to provide ease of recovery should the housing unit become separated from the lower unit housing hub.

8. The propeller protector slipper according to claim 1, wherein the means for attaching the housing unit to the vessel is a lanyard.

9. The propeller protector slipper according to claim 7, wherein the housing unit is composed of carbon fiber, polypropylene, polyethylene, or polyvinyl chloride.

10. The propeller protector slipper according to claim 1, wherein the housing unit further comprises conspicuous material applied to the front surface.

11. A method for protecting a propeller comprising

a) slipping over the propeller a propeller protector slipper comprising a housing unit for enclosing a propeller, wherein the housing unit comprises an interior, an exterior, at least one side surface, a top surface, a bottom surface, a front surface, and a back surface, wherein a portion of the back surface is cut away to accommodate a propeller shaft and the side surface(s) provide a means for the propeller to slip into the housing unit in a longitudinal direction; a means for securing the propeller within the housing unit; and a bushing/reinforcing T along the surface of the cut away back surface; and

b) securing the propeller within the housing unit.

12. The method according to claim 11, wherein the housing unit further comprises a cushioning means in the interior of the housing unit.

13. The method according to claim 11, wherein the housing unit further comprises a means for maintaining buoyancy in water.

14. The method according to claim 11, wherein the housing unit is in the shape of a modified cylinder and has two side surfaces wherein one side surface is open to allow the propeller to slip into the housing unit in a longitudinal direction.

15. The method according to claim 11, wherein the securing means comprises at least two aligned bore holes, wherein one bore hole is located at the top surface proximal to the open side of the housing unit, and the other bore hole is located on the bottom surface proximal to the open side surface of the housing unit; and a dowel rod having a proximal end and a distal end and of a sufficient size to be inserted through the bore holes; wherein the proximal end of the dowel rod and the distal end of the dowel rod comprise a means for ensuring the dowel rod remains engaged with the bore holes.

16. The method according to claim 15, wherein the means for ensuring the dowel rod remains engaged with the bore holes comprises a hole in the distal end of the dowel rod, a clevis pin to be inserted into the dowel rod hole after the dowel rod has been inserted through the bore holes, and the proximal end of the dowel rod is shaped such that it cannot pass through the bore holes.

17. The method according to claim 11, wherein the housing unit further comprising a means for attaching the housing unit to a vessel to provide ease of recovery should the housing unit become separated from the lower unit housing hub.

18. The method according to claim 17, wherein the means for attaching the housing unit to the vessel is a lanyard.

19. The method according to claim 17, wherein the housing unit is composed of carbon fiber, polypropylene, polyethylene, or polyvinyl chloride.

20. The method according to claim 11, wherein the housing unit further comprises retroreflective tape applied to the front surface.